

Welcome to the Homeless Liaison list. This listserv is a communication between the SD-DOE State Homeless Coordinator and the school districts' liaisons. Periodically, you will be receiving a short newsletter pertaining to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. If you have questions or comments, please direct them to [Laura.Johnson-Frame@state.sd.us](mailto:Laura.Johnson-Frame@state.sd.us). Where it is appropriate, your questions and comments will be shared with all liaisons across South Dakota.

*Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program  
Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act  
Amended by NCLB Act of 2001*

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### **Unaccompanied Youth**

As I have been traveling the state over the last month, districts have made aware of teenagers who are living on their own - unaccompanied youth. These young people are homeless and entitled to services by school districts. Your job as a homeless liaison is to find ways to identify these teens, make sure their physical needs are addressed, and get them in school or keep them in school.

Unaccompanied Youth include young people who have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes, and/or been abandoned by their parents or guardians. About 1/2 of these teens have been abused in the home (1/3 sexually) and 2/3 report that at least one parent was addicted to drugs or alcohol. Leaving home was a survival issue. Some teens were thrown out because they were pregnant, gay/lesbian, or their parents simply decided they could take care of themselves.

Some of these children live in South Dakota. They may be staying on the couch of a friend, they may be living in an abandoned building, and they may be coming to school each day. Do you see them in your district?

As the homeless liaison, you are to identify these teens whether or not they are currently enrolled as students. They are entitled to free lunch, possible transportation, may need social services or medical services, and they need to be in school.

Attached is a brief on Unaccompanied Youth that should help you in understanding your role in working with these young people and your role to insure that your district is implementing the McKinney-Vento Law.

**Need more information, call or write. Thanks**

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